

FLU SEASON

Every year, influenza, or “flu,” affects employers and businesses. Flu costs the U.S. approximately **\$10.4 billion*** in direct costs for hospitalizations and outpatient visits for adults. According to the CDC, each year about 8 percent of the U.S. population gets the influenza virus. The vaccine’s effectiveness in preventing **it varies from year to year**. The seasonal flu vaccine protects against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the upcoming season. Traditional flu vaccines (called “trivalent” vaccines) are made to protect against three flu viruses; an influenza A (H1N1) virus, an influenza A (H3N2) virus, and an influenza B virus. There are also flu vaccines made to protect against four flu viruses (called “quadrivalent” vaccines). These vaccines protect against the same viruses as the trivalent vaccine and an additional B virus. Flu vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body **about two weeks after vaccination. These antibodies provide protection against infection with the viruses that are in the vaccine.**

Influenza A- Is constantly changing and has many subtypes and strains (including H1N1 and H3N2). **It typically causes the most intense symptoms.**

Influenza B- Only infects humans and is usually (but not always) less severe than A.

Influenza C is also a strictly human virus, but it tends to be milder than A and B, and doesn’t lead to epidemics, per the CDC.

Flu Symptoms Include:

- ✓ A fever of 100.4F/38C degrees or higher or feeling feverish (**not everyone with the flu has a fever**)
- ✓ A cough and/or sore throat
- ✓ A runny or stuffy nose
- ✓ Headaches and/or body aches
- ✓ Chills
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea (most common in children)

Although there are antiviral medications to assist in treating the flu, you must be aware of how this could impact those around you (family members, yourself, co-workers, patients, or possibly the public). Some people already have compromised immune systems due to an illness (ex..diabetes, cancer, heart disease, etc...) No matter when you decide to get the vaccine the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention just recommends that you do, not only to protect yourself but those around you.

Source: [CDC.gov/flu](https://www.cdc.gov/flu)